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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL **AI Index: ASA 21/86/97**

EXTRA 155/97 **Fear of ill-treatment / Medical concern / Ill-treatment / Excessive use of force** **14 November 1997**

EAST TIMOR

Antonio Viegas, 24, student
Albino Barros, 24, student
Natalina de Araujo [f], student
And at least two other students (names unknown)

Five East Timorese students shot and wounded in a confrontation with Indonesian police in Dili, the capital of East Timor, have been taken to a military hospital. The five appear to be being denied access to humanitarian and legal assistance, raising serious concerns for their well-being in custody.

Reports of the events are still unclear but it is believed that a confrontation between students and the security forces began at the University of East Timor in Dili early in the morning of 14 November 1997. Students are reported to have thrown stones at members of the security forces at the university. Riot police arrived to quell the disturbance. The police claim they fired warning shots in the air.

At least five youths are known to have been wounded by the gunfire, three of whom are believed to be Antonio Viegas, Albino Barros and Natalina de Araujo. Amnesty International cannot confirm the identities of the two other students.

One of the students, who received a life-threatening gunshot wound in the neck, was forcibly removed from a vehicle of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) by police. Eyewitnesses have reported that he was immediately severely beaten by the police before being taken away. It is believed that he and the other four known to have been wounded were taken to the military hospital in Dili, Wirahusada Hospital, where they are believed to be currently in custody. Allegations that one of those wounded has since died cannot be confirmed.

There are reports that up to 11 students have been taken into custody but it is not clear if this includes the five students known to have been taken to the military hospital. The Indonesian military have admitted that arrests have been made. Agence France Press has reported the East Timor Military Commander as stating that *"a few people were arrested for criminal actions"*.

Amnesty International is concerned that the five students known to have been wounded are at risk of further ill-treatment at the military hospital, particularly in view of the treatment handed out to the man taken out of the ICRC vehicle. Torture and ill-treatment of political detainees is routine in East Timor, in particular when detainees are denied access to humanitarian assistance, independent legal advice and their families.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This week marks the sixth anniversary of the Santa Cruz massacre in Dili, East Timor, when at least 100 and possibly many more people were killed or "disappeared" after the security forces opened fire on a peaceful demonstration. [See *East Timor: Truth, justice and redress*, ASA 21/81/97, November 1997]. Several demonstrations have taken place in both East Timor and Indonesia to mark the anniversary. The news agency, AP-Dow Jones, reported that on 12 November 1997 two people were arrested during a commemoration demonstration at a high school in Dili.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia or English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to clarify the identity and whereabouts of those wounded and those taken into custody after the confrontation between students and police at Dili University on 14 November 1997;
- seeking assurances that those in custody are receiving all necessary medical attention, and have immediate and on-going access to humanitarian organizations, independent legal assistance and their families;
- seeking assurances that those in custody are not at risk of torture or ill-treatment, and asking to be informed of the charges against them;

if possible, also:

- call for an independent and full inquiry into the police handling of the incident to investigate the police use of excessive force; to determine what procedures were followed by the police when they opened fire on the students and to investigate the ill-treatment of the student taken from the ICRC car.

APPEALS TO:

COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES (ABRI)
General Feisal Tanjung
Panglima ABRI
Markas Besar ABRI
Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No 13
Jakarta Timur
Indonesia
Faxes: + 62 213450918 (working 14/11/97) (c/o Coordinating Minister for Security and Political Affairs - ask for your fax to be forwarded)
Telegrams: Markas Besar ABRI, Jakarta Timur, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear General

It can be difficult to send a fax to Indonesia. If you fail repeatedly to get through, you may send a fax to the Indonesian Embassy in your country, asking them to forward it on to the address above as a matter of urgency.

COPIES TO:

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Ali Alatas S.H.
Menteri Luar Negeri
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and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 14 December 1997.